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Efficiency measures for sustainability within a business schools' context

Wim Lambrechts^{1 2 *}, Luc Van Liedekerke^{2 3}, Sara Rymenams¹, Anne De Cort¹

¹ University Colleges Leuven-Limburg (UCLL), Management and Technology

² University of Antwerp (UA), Department of Philosophy

³ Antwerp Management School (AMS)

* Corresponding author, e-mail: wim.lambrechts@ucll.be, tel.: +32475709743

Abstract: One of the essential parts within the transition towards sustainable economies, is the way how higher education prepares its students for their future role in business. In order for them to contribute to corporate social responsibility within the enterprise context, they need specific skills and competences related to sustainable development. Derived from the societal role of business schools in preparing the future business leaders and entrepreneurs, the focus of this paper is the participation in, and the contribution of business schools to the issues of efficiency measures for sustainability. This topic could be wider situated within the context of higher education for sustainable development, which aims at integrating competences for sustainable development into the curriculum, and integrating sustainability measures within campus operations, research and societal role ('walk your talk'). The paper furthermore looks at a business school context as a case for institutional efficiency measures.

The paper describes how business schools could implement efficiency measures and apply instruments within their own context, looking at the campus as a ‘living laboratory’ for sustainability innovation. The paper describes how tools and instruments to foster sustainability integration are applied on campus, its benefits and possible problems. The paper focuses on the application of three instruments: Assessment Instrument for Sustainability in Higher Education; Ecological Footprint Analysis; and Principles for Responsible Management Education. It builds upon the data and results from several action research projects within two Belgian business schools. As a conclusion, the paper will reflect upon the essential characteristics of these initiatives, as a way to enhance efficiency measures for sustainability both within the business school itself, as within a wider business context.

Keywords: AISHE, business school, ecological footprint analysis, efficiency measures, higher education, PRME, stakeholders, sustainability

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